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Strategizing to Stop Mass Deportations



**PREPARING
TO
CONFRONT
DONALD
TRUMP'S
SECOND
TERM**

CRIMETHINC. EX-WORKERS COLLECTIVE

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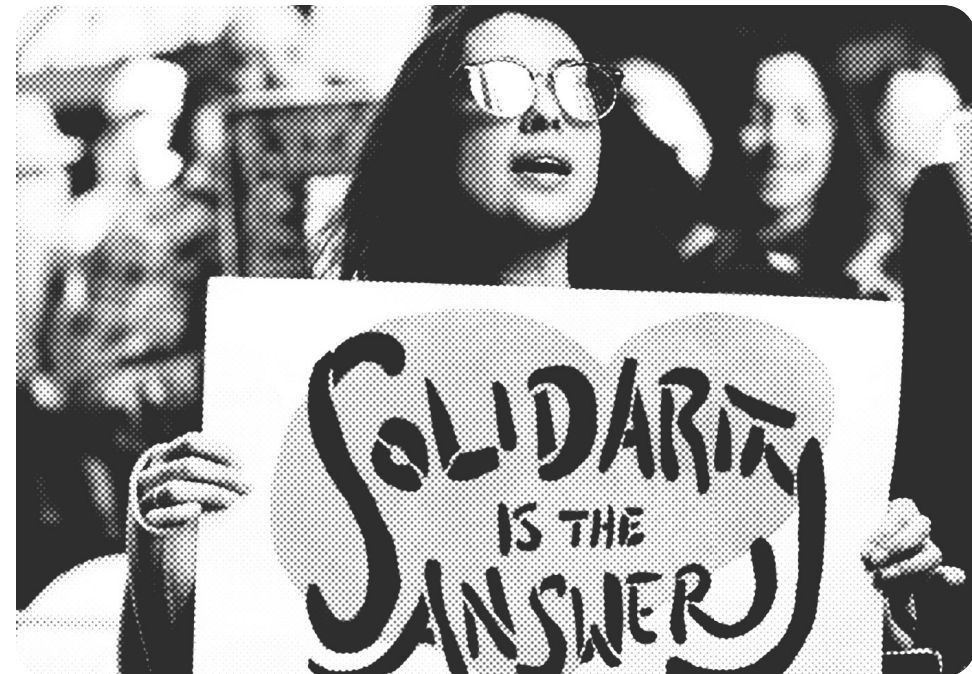
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whatever action they can, and the combination of anger and small, concrete victories will motivate more people to act.

The deportations—and any struggle against them—will happen in physical reality, not on social media. If a dozen communities begin immediately organizing mass strategic resistance to deportation, researching logistical chains, outlining targets and strategic goals, and welcoming a diversity of participants and tactics, they could demonstrate effective resistance and light a signal fire for others around the country. If people get organized now and begin to map out and target the infrastructure for mass deportation before Trump takes office, they could seize the initiative, set the tempo, and force him to be the one to have to react.

In 2017, when Trump signed the so-called “Muslim ban,” a single mass occupation at JFK Airport in New York sparked occupations involving tens of thousands of people around the country. Tactics spread rapidly when they are inspiring. What can you and your community do, right now, to prepare to inspire nationwide resistance to the deportation machine?



Fundamentally, this is a struggle between empathy and selfishness, between solidarity and hatred.



The Democrats have no intention to stand up for those that Donald Trump intends to attack. They are the knowing accomplices of fascism.

detention facilities be staged? Who will build them? What airports will these deportation flights leave from? What supply lines will support them? How many low-wage airport workers have a stake in the fight against fascism?

In one possible version of an anti-deportation struggle, there will be mass demonstrations, moral outrage, fruitless lawsuits, and symbolic civil disobedience. Most of the participants will be self-professed activists. Efforts to center the authority of existing formal organizations that are not in a position to call for certain kinds of action will impose limits on what tactics the movement can experiment with. Internal divisions and interpersonal competition for control of the movement will further hamper it.

In another possible version of the struggle, every sector of society will become involved in resisting the deportation machine. Local liberal-leaning governments will be pressured into refusing to cooperate with federal agencies. Rapid response networks will bring people out in massive numbers to confront raids—and not all of them will limit themselves to following the leadership of official organizations. Bus drivers will go on strike; buses will mysteriously cease to function; coordinated highway blockades could shut down traffic to airports that are critical deportation hubs. Every form of struggle will emerge, and every participant will be encouraged to take



The incoming administration has been very clear about their intention to maintain public support by attacking scapegoats. This was one of the central promises of their campaign and it is popular among Trump's core supporters. We can understand this as the desire of an increasingly powerless population to enact violence vicariously through a brutal autocrat—an ominous sign of human beings turning on each other as profit margins diminish and prospects for the future decline.

If we let Donald Trump and Stephen Miller expand the infrastructure of state violence, using military funds to build “vast holding facilities” for the millions that they have promised to arrest and deport, they will not stop at deporting undocumented immigrants. Once that additional infrastructure exists, they will turn it against one target after another. Eventually, they will come for all of us.

All who don't want to see their neighbors, friends, and classmates or coworkers disappeared share a responsibility to act. During Trump's first term, opposition to his border regime was a powerful cause of popular unrest, from the airport occupations in response to his “Muslim Ban” to the Occupy ICE encampments and the outpouring of solidarity following his manufactured “border crisis” in fall 2018. In 2019, when Donald Trump announced that ICE was about to carry out a new round of massive raids, Willem van Spronsen gave his life in an attempt to disable the fleet of buses serving a private immigration detainment facility in Tacoma. Afterwards, asked why the raids were not happening, an ICE official expressed that they were concerned for the safety of their officers.

Opposition to Trump's border policies initially emerged in the streets;

only afterwards did legal challenges emerge in the courts. Now, of course, we cannot expect much from a court system that will be dominated by Trump appointees. It will be necessary take steps to prevent the deportation machinery from functioning: to block it via mass action when possible, but also to throw sand in the gears, to disrupt its logistics and organization.

Let's take a brief look at how Trump might implement these mass deportations and what forms resistance could assume.

According to Jason Hauser, the chief of staff for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) under Biden, the infrastructure already exists to expand the deportation machine to a massive scale. Guatemalan, Haitian, and Honduran communities may be targeted first, because deportation to those countries is more straightforward than to many other countries. These communities will likely be targeted with raids at workplaces, churches, hospitals, and schools, and the arrests of those who are already on the record for nonviolent offences or because of their limbo status in an asylum process. Expect raids, buses, and camps.



The fascism they want.

Once apprehended, these people must be transported to holding facilities. Those could be rapidly erected tents, existing jails that are packed to two or three times their official capacity limits, warehouses converted into temporary detention facilities, military bases, or new facilities constructed with military funding. One official claims that 25 temporary detention facilities could be created in existing warehouses in just one week.

Once in custody, the arrestees will eventually be deported by plane flights. ICE currently has 14 dedicated deportation planes that can carry 135 people each, amounting to a total capacity of 1890 people per round trip. They also contract out many flights through Classic Air Charter, subcontracting with Swift Air and World Atlantic Airlines. If Trump succeeds in invoking the Insurrection Act or the Alien Enemies Act to mobilize the military and bypass immigration hearings, this number could rise dramatically. The current ICE director estimates that between 150,000 and 200,000 people could be deported within the first one or two months, and up to a million in the first 100 days.

This is frightening. And yet plans rarely survive contact with reality. Mass deportation would mean visible ICE actions with the cooperation of law enforcement in every sector of society. It would mean buses filled with prisoners everywhere. It would mean local law enforcement agencies being pulled away from other tasks and redirected towards immigration enforcement. It would mean plane after plane full of neighbors, family members, and friends, handcuffed and waiting on the tarmac. All of these are opportunities for resistance to erupt. The deportations will not all occur in darkness; many of them will take place in public, in broad daylight. It is up to us to make sure that no one can ignore them, and to help others to understand what they can do.

Armies succeed or fail based on their logistics. A complex logistical chain involving multiple agencies and forms of transportation, directed by leaders who are attempting to act on a much larger scale than before, will be prone to failure. How might these logistical links fail?

As the saying goes, our enemies have names and addresses. During the first Trump presidency, people doxxed every ICE agent they could find. Every raid will require the cooperation of local law enforcement; each one will involve staging areas and transport buses. Where do the buses come from? Who maintains them? Are those people also ideologically invested in fascism, or do some of them have misgivings? Where will the new